

Reality, Respect, and Responsibility

By Donna Farid, RN, PGOR, CPN(C)

As I reflect on becoming President of ORNAC, my prevailing thoughts have to do with three R's: **Reality, Respect, and Responsibility**. Although each of these words represents an independent focus, they are also interdependent. The **Reality** of being President is here and now. In my role as President-Elect, although I actively participated on the Executive of ORNAC, my main function was one of observation, gathering information, meeting stakeholders, and learning. Vija Hay's guidance during this time was invaluable, and I will certainly continue to seek her input and feedback over the next two years. Thank you, Vija, for all that you shared with me. I am most appreciative.

I have a deep and abiding **Respect** for all that ORNAC stands for and all of those it represents. Out of this respect comes a strong sense of **Responsibility** to work together with the Board and Executive to maintain ORNAC's well established reputation and high regard among many professional associations, health care and educational institutions, the surgical supply industry, and the membership. This reputation is a result of a tremendous amount of work by dedicated Perioperative Nursing leaders from every province, who volunteer their knowledge, time and effort to represent Perioperative Registered Nurses nationally. We will endeavor to continue to address current and future health care issues that affect all of us.

When I received the Chain of Office on May 2nd in Ottawa, I informed the audience that I was the first staff nurse to become President of ORNAC. I believe this gives me a special insight into the concerns, needs, and issues of the majority of the membership, the direct patient care providers. My mandate over the next two years is to speak out on behalf of Perioperative Registered Nurses at every opportunity. But I must emphasize that it is no longer sufficient to sit back and expect others to secure your future for

you. It is imperative for all nurses to become involved in proudly promoting their professional commitment to the best patient care in Canada.

Look at the incredible response in the certification process. In just three years, over 1,000 nurses have successfully written a National Certification exam the largest specialty nursing group to seed certification in the country. This speaks volumes about the commitment of Perioperative nurses to their professional competence!

Dr. Judith Shamian, speaker at the closing of the 15th National ORNAC Conference in Ottawa, said:

- “Registered Nurses must take stock of the issues, as women, and as professionals.”

- “We must make alliances internally and especially externally to halt the chipping away at our professional roles and the giving away of the body parts of our patients, and instead, promote recognition of the holistic care we want to give.”

- “The professional nurse is one who applies knowledge, science and art to patient care, and is continuously reprioritizing the nursing process and tailoring it to patients and their families.”

- “This professional high level care is worth supporting.”

Join me in this campaign to inform and educate the public to increase their awareness of the expert care they deserve to receive during their surgical experience.

Donna Farid, RN, CPN(C), is the 1997-1999 President of the Operating Room Nurses Association of Canada. She is a Staff RN in Cardiovascular Surgery at the Queen Elizabeth II Health Science Centre, Halifax, Nova Scotia.

Audrey Macdonald wins the 1997 Johnson&Johnson Medical Products Drake-Thompson Writing Award of \$3000 for her article “Measuring Quality: Evaluating Personal Competencies” published in the March/April, 1996 issue of this Journal. Making the presentation at the National is Paul Montador of J&J.

Below: J&J took a new approach in their National Conference exhibit. Instead of focusing on product they highlighted a current need of the OR nurse - stress management by hiring a dozen message therapists to work out delegate stress. In a stress profile test conducted at the exhibit 66% of the nurses indicated stress levels of “fair to poor”, however 67% showed they were coping with their stress in a good manner- probably because 69% reported having strong social support. Medium to high signs of anger was present in 56% of those surveyed.



Dr. Joan Donald stands to take the applause and the expression of pride from her friends and the delegates at the National Conference. She is Canada's first OR nurse to achieve the doctoral level. Joan is a past president of ORNAC and former winner of both the ORNAC writing award and the prestigious Isabelle Adams Award for Excellence in Perioperative nursing.

